A

REVIEW

OF THE

SPEECH

OF

THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,

IN THE

BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 1799.

BY ROBERT ORR, ESQ.

When men talk of liberality and reciprocity in commercial matters, it is clear, either they have no argument or no knowledge of the subject, that they are supporting a favourite hypothesis, or that they are interested.

Lord Sheffield on the Commerce of the American States, p. 200.

——Is the Union here?

Shakespear's Hamlet, act 5th, scene 5th.

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A

REVIEW, &c.

THE ſpeech of the Britiſh Miniſter has been publiſhed, and diligently circulated. The advocates of an Union declare, it contains every argument that can be urged in favour of the meaſure. I conſider the gratuitous diſtribution of it by the King's Printer, an invitation from the adminiſtration of this country to examine its merits. I have read the production. I am neither convinced by its argument, nor captivated by its eloquence. It contains nothing but unqualified aſſertions, hypothetic propoſitions, and inſidious propoſals. And I hope to prove to the ſatisfaction of every thinking man, that the liberty and commerce of Ireland, and the true intereſts of the Britiſh empire, depend upon the rejection of an Incorporate Union with England. Among the chief arguments urged by the Miniſter for its

adoption, is the great encouragement our linen trade has experienced from Great Britain, accompanied with an inſinuation, that the future withholding of this advantage, may be the puniſhment of our refuſal. I ſhall enquire into the origin and nature of Engliſh liberality to the linen manufacture of Ireland.

The progreſs of Ireland in the woollen manufacture, had alarmed the jealouſy of Britiſh monopoly. The fears of the ſelfiſh manufacturer, communicated to the Government, became a principle of action. And the Lords Commiſſioners of Trade in England, in 1697, adviſed the prevention of the export of all woollen manufacture from Ireland, frize excepted.* In conformity to that recommendation, the Lords and Commons addreſſed William, to diſcourage the woollen manufacture of Ireland—and they in return promiſed to promote the linen manufacture of the kingdom to the greateſt advantage. The King returned a favorable anſwer. The requeſt was ſubmitted to the conſideration of the Iriſh Parliament. Their diligence did not correſpond with the anxiety of the adminiſtration, and their progreſs was quickened, by a bill from the Lords Juſtices, impoſing heavy duties on the exportation of woollens from Ireland. Four ſhillings on every 20s. value of broad cloth—2s. on every 20s. value of new drapery. Frizes were excepted. The Britiſh

* Engliſh Com. Jour. 12 Vol. P. 428.

Parliament

Parliament were not contented; and the following year, by an act of their own, prevented the exportation of all woollen goods from Ireland, except to England and Wales, from which they were excluded by high duties. Here was the firſt violation of the compact. If Ireland was content to ſacrifice to the intereſt of England, and for the couragement of her own linen, part of her woollen manufacture, it did not follow ſhe was to give up the whole. England prevented the export of frize. Ireland never intended to ſurrender it. What was the ſtate of England and Ireland at that period? Ireland enjoyed the linen and the woollen manufacture. England had the woollen. She had tried the linen, and failed in the experiment. Ireland diſcouraged a manufacture which ſhe poſſeſſed. England encouraged a manufacture which ſhe had not. It was the intereſt of England to prefer the linens of Ireland to thoſe of foreign countries. It was the intereſt of Ireland to give a ſimilar preference to the woollens of England; but it was not her intereſt to prefer them to her own. The meaſure, like the preſent propoſal of the Union, originated in England. An Iriſh Parliament reluctantly commenced, what a Britiſh Legiſlature finiſhed. At that time Ireland imported more old and new drapery than ſhe exported.* England did not act from the effects of

 exiſting

* Report of the Eng. Lord's Com. of Council p. 29—30. Sir Wm. Temple always recommended the cultivation of the Iriſh woollen manufacture, ſo as not to interfere with the

exiſting competition, but from the dread of future rivalſhip. And the experience of a century has proved, that it was the gratification of a falſe local intereſt, not the promotion of imperial proſperity.

How was the promiſe of England to encourage our linen manufacture obſerved? Until the year 1704, we did not obtain the liberty of exporting plain brown and white linens to the plantations. All printed linens were prohibited. In a ſhort time after, the Britiſh Parliament impoſed a duty of 30 per cent. on the importation of printed linens into England from foreign countries. The operation of this act was extended by the conſtruction of the Lords of the Treaſury to Ireland. By the duties on the importation of ſail cloth from Ireland, and bounties on its exportation to this country, that manufacture was annihilated. And by the 10th of Geo. 3. they gave a bounty on the exportation of printed linens from England. This laſt act of injuſtice, proved the impolicy of excluding Iriſh printed linens. After 50 years poſſeſſion of a manufacture, of which, contrary to all right they endeavoured to deprive us, they were unable to go on without a bounty. If we had prohibited the importation of coloured cloths from England, reſerving to ourſelves the profit of dying them, and given a bounty on their exportation, would that have been conſidered an

the Engliſh. The conceſſions of 1782 were in the true ſpirit of that advice.

adherence

adherence to the compact of 1698, and an encouragement of the Engliſh woollen manufacture?

I now come to that part of the Miniſter's ſpeech, in which he elaborately details the advantages which our linen trade derives from Engliſh generoſity. With reſpect to the generoſity of nations I am rather incredulous. It is as much the advantage of England to buy, as it is the intereſt of Ireland to ſell. The fine linen which ſhe uſes for her own conſumption, ſhe could not get elſewhere, and if ſhe lays a duty upon it, ſhe will only raiſe the price to her own people. The high duties on foreign linen, have always been repreſented a diſintered conceſſion to our manufacture, and it has been aſſerted that Britain taxes her own conſumption 450,000l. per ann. in our favour. All the duties on foreign linens are drawn back on exportation. An average was taken for ſix years ending in 1782, of the duties paid, and the duties withdrawn, and the medium retained duty for each year was 124,728l. os. 8d.* The high duties on foreign linen, afford more protection to the Engliſh linen manufacturer than to the Iriſh. The Engliſh conſiſts chiefly in low priced and coarſe linens. Ruſſian is frequently uſed for Bri-

* Examinator's Letters P. 20. The accounts of Mr. Tomkins, who was then aſſiſtant inſpector general, are referred to as authority. The work is anonymous, but as wherever I had an opportunity of comparing it with the authorities cited, I found it correct, I am inclined to give it credit, where ſuch compariſon has not been in my power.

tiſh ſheeting. Coarſe linen, forms a conſiderable part of the cloathing of the lower ranks in England. And in the year 1774, the Engliſh manufacturers complained they were underſold by the Ruſſians, and petitioned Parliament for an increaſe of the duty.* No other country but Ireland could ſupply the Engliſh demand for fine linen, and we have for ſome time, particularly ſince the commencement of the preſent war, ſent large quantities of fine goods to thoſe countries which originally poſſeſſed the manufacture. The export bounty encouraged her own manufacture, and ſecured to her the carrying trade of the Iriſh. The bounty was granted in 1743, and in a ſeries of thirty years, has operated more in favour of England than Ireland. In that year, 52,779 yards of Britiſh linen, and 40,907 of Iriſh, were exported on the bounty. In the year 1773, 5,235,266 of Britiſh, of Iriſh 2,832,246. We had nearly loſt not only the carrying trade of the low priced linens, but that of the fine, becauſe on exporting from Ireland without the bounty, we could not aſſort our cargoes, on the ſame terms with England. The charges of commiſſion, freight, inſurance, package, raiſed the price of the Iriſh linen $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the Engliſh market, and being exported on the ſame bounty, did not go into the foreign market on equal terms with the Engliſh. The Engliſh had therefore a ſuperiority not only over

* Engl. Com. Jour. 1774. The bounty is given of one and a half per yard on linens, of ſix per yard, and not exceedng 1s. 6d.

what

what was exported from Ireland, but over that which was exported from England. In 1780, the Iriſh Parliament deemed it neceſſary to give a ſimilar bounty on the exportation from Ireland. The Engliſh Lords of Trade declared it would be highly injurious to Ireland, and interrupt a commercial intercourſe reciprocally beneficial to both countries. Notwithſtanding this opinion, the folly of the Iriſh Parliament granted the bounty. And experience has proved Iriſh folly ſuperior to *Engliſh* wiſdom. Our exports of linen has wonderfully increaſed ſince that period, not only to foreign countries, but to England.

I ſhall give the exports to England and to foreign countries, for three years preceding the granting of the Iriſh bounty.

	England.	Foreign.
	Yards.	Yards.
1777,	19,589,425	125,213
1778,	21,779,981	165,748
1779,	18,525,648	310,394

I ſhall next give what they have been for the years 1794, 1795, 1796.

	England.	Foreign.
1794,	36,766,966	6,490,798
1795,	33,023,523	9,757,317
1796,	38,302,940	14,592,901

I have

I have taken theſe accounts from the moſt authentic documents. Thus we ſee that the exports to England and foreign countries have greatly increaſed, and that the latter have increaſed in a much larger proportion than the former. We are therefore leſs dependent on the Engliſh market than we were formerly. Had there been an Incorporate Union with England in 1780, no doubt the aſſertion of the Engliſh Board of Trade would have been concluſive, and from the pureſt regard for the reciprocal intereſt of both kingdoms, Ireland would have loſt the carrying trade of her own linen. If we had not this trade on equal terms with Briiain, our merchants could never make up aſſorted cargoes for Africa, the Weſt Indies, &c. Linen is the ſtaple with which we ſet out to carry our new manufactures to market. Mr. Pitt ſays, "the loſs which the Britiſh revenue annually ſuſ-"tains, by foregoing the duties upon Iriſh linens, "which are levied upon thoſe of other nations, "cannot be eſtimated at leſs than 700,000l. and "if the cheap rate at which foreign linen could be "brought into our market, were it not for the "heavy duty to which it is ſubject, be taken into "account, it will be found that the real annual "ſacrifice which we make in favour of this branch "of Iriſh manufacture, is very moderately ſtated "at one million." The meaning of the foregoing paſſage (which is certainly not very clearly expreſſed) muſt be, that if England impoſed on Iriſh linen a duty equal to that of the foreign, and partially or totally removed the duty on the foreign,

ſhe

ſhe would gain one million. The Engliſh domeſtic conſumption of fine linen, is chiefly ſupplied by Ireland. Low priced and coarſe linens are imported from foreign countries, partly for home uſe, partly to complete their cargoes for diſtant markets. The Engliſh linen manufacture chiefly conſiſts of the low priced and coarſe kinds. What follows from the tranſpoſition of the duties? That they would buy Iriſh fine linen dearer, foreign coarſe linen cheaper, and withdraw the protection from their own manufacture. The Britiſh Miniſter will not aſſert that the deſtruction of our ſail-cloth manufacture, the prohibition of the import by ſo high duties, of Iriſh printed linen into England, and a bounty on the export of Engliſh printed linted linen, are favours to Ireland. And I think I have proved that the Engliſh export bounty on the plain goods, and the high duty on the foreign, operate more to their advantage than ours.

I ſhall now give the balances of trade between the two countries for the years 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783, according as the accounts were made up by the Engliſh and Iriſh officers of cuſtoms in 1785, for the Lords of the Committee of Council.

Agreeable to the Engliſh accounts.

Exports from Britain to Ireland for 1780,	£.2,056,752	13	8
Imports from Ireland,	1,549,739	6	3
Balance againſt Ireland,	507,013	7	5

For the year 1781.

Exports from Britain to Ireland,	1,782,363	18	9
Imports from Ireland,	1,433,788	8	2
Balance againſt Ireland,	348,575	10	7

For the year 1782.

Exports from Britain to Ireland,	£.1,665,531	10	3
Imports from Ireland,	1,348,558	11	10
Balance againſt Ireland,	316,972	18	5

For the year 1783.

Exports from Britain to Ireland,	2,161,815	4	9
Imports from Ireland,	1,499,228	13	9
Balance againſt Ireland,	662,586	11	0

Agreeable to the Iriſh account.

Exports from Ireland to Britain, for the year 1780,	2,384,898	16	$7\frac{3}{4}$
Imports from Britain,	1,576,635	13	$5\frac{3}{4}$
Balance in favour of Ireland,	808,263	3	2

For

For the year 1781.

Exports from Ireland to Britain,	2,187,406	15	0¼
Imports from Britain,	2,432,417	13	10
Balance againſt Ireland,	245,010	18	0¾

For the year 1782.

Exports from Ireland to Britain,	2,709,766	18	2¾
Imports from Britain,	2,357,946	10	8¼
Balance in favour of Ireland,	351,820	7	6½

For the year 1783.

Exports from Ireland to Britain,	1,937,892	7	5½
Imports from Britain,	2,214,337	0	5
Balance againſt Ireland,	276,444	12	11½
Our exports to Britain for the year 1796, were	3,883,911	0	0
Imports from Britain,	3,484,608	0	0
Balance in favour of Ireland,	399,303	0	0
Exports to Britain for 1797,	3,819,075	0	0
Imports from Britain,	3,398,727	0	0
Balance in favour of Ireland,	420,348	0	0

The ſtatements of 1796 and 1797, are from Iriſh documents, of which a friend procured me a copy, and I had not an opportunity of ſeeing the Engliſh.

The Lords of the Committee of Council profeſſed themſelves unable to reconcile the difference* between the Engliſh and Iriſh accounts for the years 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783. Neither the ſuppoſition that the vanity of the Iriſh merchant prompts him to enter a greater number of yards of linen than he really exports, as they go out duty free, nor that the Cuſtom-houſe of Ireland values the linens we export, and the woollens we import, at a higher rate than they do in England, will ſolve the difficulty. But from the ſtatements now given it muſt appear, that the aſſertion of 1785, of our exporting to England two million and a half, and importing only a million,† and the preſent poſition of Mr. Pitt, that we now export to England between four and five million, and only import one million in return, are totally unfounded.

In theſe balances, the freight, tonnage, and inſurance which we pay to England, are not taken into conſideration: And no account of the ſum which ſhe draws from us for coals. I will admit that

* See their Report p. 5. In the Iriſh account of impoſts from Britain, coals are mentioned.

† This aſſertion was made in the Iriſh Parliament, but not by the preſent Speaker of the Iriſh Houſe of Commons.

The

that the average annual numerical balance in favour of Ireland, is between four and five hundred thouſand. Yet it by no means follows that the trade is more advantageous to Ireland than it is to England. On the contrary I ſhall prove, that England derives the greater benefit from the ſubſiſting intercourſe.

The true mode of aſcertaining whether a nation gains or loſes by a trade, is to examine of what the trade conſiſts, and how it is regulated. If the account is ſtated between England and Ireland, of manufacture againſt manufacture, it is highly in favour of the former, and againſt the latter. To imagine we are obliged to her for taking our proviſions, and the raw material of manufacture, duty free, would be as abſurd as to ſuppoſe that ſhe was obliged to us for taking her coals. In truth ſhe is much more obliged to us, for by working our own collieries, we could do better without her coals, than ſhe could without our cattle, beef, pork, butter, hides, ſkins, horns unwrought, tallow, hog's-lard, worſted and linen yarn.

The Britiſh Miniſter has moſt ungenerouſly and uncandidly miſrepreſented that gentleman. By Orde's bill, the criterion of the compact being violated by Britain, was to have been the addreſs of both Houſes of our Parliament declaring its infringement. The man who voted for that bill, might with great propriety vote againſt an Union, though I cannot perceive how the perſons who negatived that bill, could with any conſiſtency vote for an Union.

yarn.* The high eſtimation of ſome of theſe articles in England is apparent, from their exportation being prohibited, viz. hides, horn unwrought, ſkins, tallow, yarn of all kinds, lambs and rams alive. Suppoſe we ſend annually to England 1,200,000l. worth of linen, ſhe is not to be credited for the whole. We muſt deduct what ſhe imports to aſſort her cargoes for foreign markets. We ſhould alſo allow for thoſe manufactures that are properly branches of the linen, which we import from Britain, and the remainder is the real encouragement which the Iriſh linen manufacture derives from the domeſtic conſumption of England. What do we yield in return? An excluſive preference to her woollens, and a decided preference to every other manufacture, not only over thoſe of foreign countries, but even over our own. Hence the Engliſh underſells the Iriſh manufacturer in the Iriſh market.

Thus for one manufacture we ſacrifice all others, and thoſe very goods of Iriſh manufacture, which England excludes from her market, by abſolute prohibition, or high duty, we admit into

* I am informed we now export no raw wool. And the quantity of either kind of yarn is quite inconſiderable. So that without an Union, we are exporting leſs and manufacturing more of our raw material than formerly. England muſt have felt ſome inconvenience from the decline of the export of yarn from this country, as they uſed our woollen yarn in the woollen manufacture, and the linen in their cotton. Ruſſia and Pruſſia prohibit it altogether. Germany lays high duties on its export.

ours at a trifling impoſt, and are underſold, to the prejudice of our own people.* The woollen is a much more valuable manufacture than the linen. It employs a greater number of hands, and the country itſelf affords the raw material. The annual average value of woollen goods ſent to market by a diſtrict in Yorkſhire, not exceeding thirty miles ſquare, amounted to 3,373,700l. 15s. 7½d. (This appears by the report of the Lords of the Committee of Council, in 1785.) A ſum nearly equal to the whole export of Ireland to Britain, for the years 1796 and 1797. Thus the trade of a ſmall Engliſh diſtrict, in 1785, was nearly equal to the trade of all Ireland with Britain in 1797. The trade of the diſtrict conſiſts entirely of the woollen manufacture. A conſiderable part of that of Ireland, is the export

* All manner of woollen cloth, ſtuffs of all ſorts made or mixed with wool, cotton manufactures, cotton and linen mixed, linen printed, cotton ſtockings, thread ſtockings, leather manufactures, candles of tallow, ſoap hard, ſoap ſoft, refined ſugar, are returned by the Engliſh Commiſſioners of Cuſtoms to the Lords of the Committee of Council, as prohibited by high duties. All which come into Ireland at a trifling duty. Cheeſe, gold and ſilver twiſt, laces, gold and ſilver lace, gauze, ſilk, ribands, ſilk manufacture, viz. luteſtrings, ſilks wrought, flowered, or mixed with gold, ſilk ſtockings, velvets, gloves, glaſs ware, earthen ware. All of which, the greater number are actually prohibited, and the reſt virtually ſo, by high duties. And all are admitted into this country at a ſmall one. This account is taken from the papers preſented by the Commiſſioners of Cuſtoms in England, in the year 1785, to the Lords of the Committee of Council.

of raw material. In exchanging the woollen for the linen manufacture, we acted unwiſely. We retained the leaſt beneficial, and diſcouraged the moſt profitable. England depends not entirely upon her woollens. Why ſhould we upon our linens. The nation which is ſupported by one manufacture, is like a ſhopkeeper whoſe dealings are confined to a ſingle cuſtomer. In proportion to the variety of her manufactures, her trade is extenſive, and "her proſperity will feel leſs ſenſibly the revolutions and uncertainties to which "every ſpecies of commerce muſt be always expoſed." The balance of trade between Ruſſia and England, is conſiderably againſt England, yet the trade is highly conducive to her advantage. She exports her manufactures to Ruſſia, and brings back in return naval ſtores, raw material,* coarſe linen, which is not more than one-tenth of the whole Ruſſian exports. She pays near 800,000l. annually to Ruſſia, and conſiders it a profitable trade. Yet the terms of her intercourſe with Ireland are more advantageous, the duties on the export of our raw material, and on the import of her manufacture, being leſs than thoſe of Ruſſia. What would the ſagacious Catherine have ſaid? If the Britiſh Ambaſſador had propoſed equal duties between the countries. She would have anſwered, that is to admit Engliſh manufacture into my dominions, at the ſame rate which Ruſſian raw material is imported into England. Though the duties may be

* Hume's Eſſays devoir. mo. ed. Jealouſy of Trade p. 109.

equal

equal, there is no reciprocity. Such was the reciprocity of the former commercial propoſitions, and ſuch is the reciprocity of Pitt's preſent propoſal. I have proved the impoſition of a high duty on Iriſh linen would be prejudicial even to England. In this country retaliation would be the conſequence. Who would ſuffer moſt? We poſſeſs almoſt every manufacture in common with England (china and earthen ware excepted) but not in the ſame ſtate of improvement. It follows that the puniſhment of Engliſh injuſtice, would be the encouragement of Iriſh induſtry. It may be aſſerted that we ſhould be expoſed to the frauds of our own manufacturers. To this I anſwer, that a certain home market affording conſtant employment, the workmen muſt encreaſe. And the competition of additional numbers, would in a ſhort time prevent impoſition.

Admitting for a moment that in this ſtate of things the linen manufacture might be injured, our other manufactures being protected, would in time draw to them a portion of the wealth and induſtry which that had hitherto employed. And the aggregate of national riches and labour would not be diminiſhed from part ceaſing to flow in its accuſtomed channel. The Britiſh manufacturers are fully ſenſible of the pernicious effects of non-importation agreements. And if the injuſtice of the Britiſh Miniſter ſhould force the Iriſh Legiſlature to make non-importation agreements the law of the land, he might raiſe a clamour

which he could not appeaſe, and provoke an oppoſition which might reduce him to the inſignificance of private ſtation.

I have heard it aſſerted that we are dependent on Britain for coals, ſalt, bark, malt, hops, tin. I ſhall examine theſe in their order. Not to mention that a moderate tax on abſentees, properly applied, would encourage the working of our own collieries, which with turf would afford us ſufficient fuel, it is as much the intereſt of England to ſell her coals, as it is ours to buy them. The Iriſh coal trade has always been conſidered one of the chief nurſeries of the Britiſh navy. And I believe the Lords of the Admirality would not conſider an interruption of the trade a benefit to the Empire. Nor would Lord Lonſdale conſider himſelf much obliged to his old friend, if he forced the Iriſh, by a high duty on coals, to encourage their own collieries. Next with reſpect to ſalt. Should England refuſe her ſalt, I aſſert, on the authority of Lord Sheffield,* we could get it from Portugal. We might pay ſomewhat dearer for it. But we would be indemnified by thoſe countries which take our proviſions. And England, by ſuch a wiſe regulation, would enhance the expence of victualling her own navy. And I am certain that England does not think it her intereſt that we ſhould take ſalt from any other country, becauſe ſhe prohibits the importation of

* Obſervations on American Commerce P. 44.

ſalt

ſalt fiſh from Ireland, unleſs *cured with ſalt from Great Britain.† We could procure bark from the Eaſt country and America. The ſhips which bring bark from Wales, return in ballaſt. With the former countries we ſhould exchange our manufactures for their bark. Add to this the advantage of double freight, and we ſhould be ſupplied nearly on as cheap terms as from England. The importation of malt diſcourages our own agriculture. Our importation of tin is trifling, for which in general caſt iron and copper might be ſubſtituted. The numerical balance of the trade of Ireland with foreign parts, is againſt her. Yet it by no means follows that the trade is diſadvantageous. In 1780 we exported 12,816 tanned hides to foreign countries—untanned 4,989. The ſame year we exported to England 61,060 untanned, and not one tanned, by the Engliſh account. The Iriſh account ſtates the untanned at 63,788, the tanned 366 ‡ I have always conſidered the tax on Iriſh leather impolitic. By diſcouraging our own manufacture, it operates as a premium on

* From the papers prepared for the Lords of the Committee of Council 1785.

† We are not dependent on Engliſh rock ſalt for our ſalt works, for ſalt can be made from ſea water. It is ſo in Scotland. Examination of ſalt manufacturers before the Com. of Eng. Lords P. 324.

‡ See the Engliſh and Iriſh accounts, which were made up for the Lords of the Committee of Council in England 1785.

the exportation of raw hides to England. The Engliſh tanner has ſufficient advantages. Allum, oil, ſalt, bark, are cheaper there than here. And tho' the nominal rate of labour may be leſs here than there. Yet as I am told the workmen have perquiſites in our tan-yards, which they have not in England, the rates are nearly on an equality. I am not ſo abſurd as to maintain that if the ſupply of the articles which I have mentioned was interrupted, we would not ſuffer material inconveniences. But I think I have ſufficiently proved, that we are not ſo dependent on Britain, that we could not procure them elſewhere. That it is equally her intereſt to give, as it is ours to take them. That a war of prohibitory duties would be deſtructive of our mutual intereſts, and prove equally injurious, if not more ſo, to England than to Ireland. The adoption of ſo ruinous a meaſure would in a ſhort time lead to that fatal extremity which every true friend of the Empire dreads to contemplate, which the Britiſh Miniſter hopes never will arrive, and which, to retort on him his own words, NEVER WILL ARRIVE, except from "the blind "counſels of thoſe who may unfortunately have "the management of affairs in the ſiſter king-"dom." I therefore pity the weakneſs of that man who ſeriouſly believes that the Miniſter really intends to impoſe heavy duties on Iriſh linen, and to withdraw the advantages we acquired in 1782. I cannot think he has the leaſt intention of recurring to a ſyſtem which he has repeatedly declared incompatible with true juſtice, ſound policy, injurious

jurious to Ireland, pernicious to England, and which, if re-eſtabliſhed, becauſe we refuſe to accept as a favour the moſt inſulting propoſal ever made to a free people, muſt deſtroy all future confidential intercourſe between the countries, and exhibit England to ſurrounding nations as the brighteſt example of the moſt finiſhed perfidy.

I ſhall now conſider the commercial advantages intended for this country by the ſixth of the propoſitions ſubmitted to the Britiſh Parliament. In the ſith propoſition I perceive apparent equality, real inequality. I recognize the old ſyſtem of the 20 Engliſh propoſitions contained in Orde's bill. The liberty of exporting European produce to England at the ſame duties which it there pays on direct importation from its native country, will not be enjoyed differently after an Union. And we import from the Weſt Indies and Africa, and export to England, on the ſame terms ſhe imports from thoſe countries and exports to Ireland.

The fair conſtruction of the Navigation act, which contains this benefit was offered 1785. We refuſe . .., becauſe accompanied with an obligation to adopt implicitly all Engliſh commercial regulations. This we obtained in 1793. The extravagance of the Miniſter is greater than that of the Sibyl. He now demands the annihilation of our Parliament, for advantages inferior to thoſe for which he formerly required the abridgment of its power. "No duty," ſays the ſixth propoſition,

tion, "ſhall be impoſed on the import and ex-
"port between Great Britain and Ireland, of any
"article now duty free. And that on the other
"articles there ſhall be eſtabliſhed, for a time to
"be limited, ſuch a moderate rate of equal duties,
"as ſhall previous to the Union be agreed upon,
"and approved by the reſpective Parliaments,
"ſubject after the expiration of ſuch limited time,
"to be diminiſhed equally, with reſpect to both
"kingdoms, but in no caſe to be increaſed." This, while it appears to open the Engliſh market to Ireland, ſecures the Iriſh market to the Engliſh manufacturers. The Iriſh manufacturer wants not the Engliſh market. He deſires the home market. He knows by experience the Engliſh manufacturer underſells him in the home market. To ſuppoſe *that moderate equal duties* would enable him to meet the other in the Engliſh market, is abſurd. If the propoſition had gone no farther, it was poſſible that Engliſh capital and Engliſh improvement might emigrate to Ireland, not for the command of the Iriſh market, which they have already, but to ſupply England from Ireland. This muſt be prevented. And therefore comes the clauſe, that "where any articles the growth,
"produce, or manufacture of either country, are
"ſubject to any internal duty in one kingdom,
"ſuch countervailing duties (over and above any
"duties on import to be fixed as aforeſaid) ſhall
"be impoſed as ſhall be neceſſary to prevent any
"inequality in that reſpect." Now which country has, and which is moſt likely to have always the

the higheſt internal duties? England. It follows that the Britiſh manufacturer removing to Ireland, will ſupply the Britiſh market on worſe terms than if he had remained at home. He will pay two duties inſtead of one. His former internal tax is changed into a countervailing duty, and he pays in addition the import duty common to both countries. He will ſtay where he is. Thus protecting duties are granted to England, refuſed to Ireland—our market left open to their goods, their market ſhut againſt ours. And the emigration of capital effectually prevented.

I have ſeen a ſmall pamphlet, gratuitouſly diſtributed, containing parts of the examinations of the Engliſh manufacturers, ſelected for the purpoſe of inducing an opinion that the conſequence of the Union would be the emigration of capital to Ireland. It is ſomewhat extraordinary that when the different manufacturers were examined before the Lords of the Committee of Council, and were informed that it was the intention to admit Iriſh manufacture into England at the ſame moderate duty of 10 and $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. at which the Engliſh was admitted into Ireland, with an additional duty countervailing the internal one to which the Engliſh were ſubject. Not one of them entertained the leaſt apprehenſion from the Iriſh in the Britiſh market. By this regulation, they obtained a ſolid advantage, ſecurity againſt the revival of Iriſh non importation agreements.

The

The woollen, cotton, callicoe, and ſilk manufacturers all ſtate, that they had been materially injured by non-importation agreements.* The woollen manufacturers admit, the price of ſpinning excepted, the rate of labour to be the ſame in both countries. And the raw material is cheaper in England than Ireland. After the 11 propoſitions had paſſed the Iriſh Parliament, and been returned to England, their fears were excited. And they appear before the Committees of the Engliſh Lords and Commons, in all the inſanity of prejudiced apprehenſion. They acknowledge they do not diſcover from the propoſitions any advantage which they did not enjoy before the non-importation agreements. They ſtate that the advantages of Ireland in the coarſe cotton will be about 20 per cent—in the fine goods more. Now though the proportion of the price of labour to the value of the raw material, is greater in fine than in coarſe goods, yet as greater ingenuity is requiſite, admitting that our manufacturing labour is cheaper than that of England, it is impoſſible we could rival her in the fine goods. This is confirmed by Mr. Brooke's examination, (before the Committee of Lords p. 370) who declared that he never attempted the finer articles. And added, as his coarſe manufacture increaſed, ſo the importation of the fine enlarged. That it

* See Report of Lords Committee of Council p. 18, 20, 24, 26, 36, 43. Minutes of evidence before Committee of the Commons p. 33, 31.

appeared

appeared ſo from the Cuſtom-houſe books, and was the caſe in the woollen and other manufactures. They aſſert from the cheapneſs of labour, from the low price of proviſions, and few taxes we ſhall have, after paying the two duties, an advantage over them in the Britiſh market, from 12 to 13 per cent. It appeared to the Committee if their calculation was juſt, that the Engliſh manufacture went to the Iriſh market, at a diſadvantage of 38 per cent. and yet they ſold goods in Ireland. The Committee thought they made the aſſertion generally; and aſked if any ſuch trade could poſſibly exiſt. They anſwer that no plain manufacture could, but the printing buſineſs might, its value conſiſting chiefly in the taſte of the pattern and execution of the work. And that Engliſh goods were worn in Ireland at that advanced rate. What follows? That we cannot in the printing buſineſs come near them in our own, much leſs in the Britiſh market. And it equally follows that in any branch of Engliſh manufacture which ſells in Ireland, an Iriſh ſimilar branch could not, in conſequence of the then propoſed regulations, have had an advantage of 13 per cent. in the Britiſh market. They aſſert the price of labour to be leſs in Ireland, yet they are unable to tell the prices in the Iriſh cotton works. They admit the cheapneſs of labour ariſes in ſome degree from the lower claſſes in Ireland living in an inferior manner. And when they are aſked, will not the Engliſh manufacturers, if they remove to Ireland, expect to live as well

well there as they did in their own country. They cannot anſwer for their expectations. They know that the taxes are numerically leſs in Ireland than in England. But whether they are leſs in proportion to the ability of the country, they are incompetent to ſpeak. On their direct examination, ſome of them are determined to emigrate. But when they are aſked by the committee is it their ſerious intention, they will firſt ſend a little of their capital, to try how it will do. Admitting that we have all the advantages which the Engliſh manufacturers aſſert, it is the intereſt of the Britiſh merchant this moment to execute his Weſt Indian orders in Ireland. Why does he not? Becauſe our people, on account of ſmall capital, cannot give equal credit with the Engliſh. Here is the advantage of capital over property. Will the Engliſhman emigrate, for an advantage he already poſſeſſes?

They declare an opinion that the Engliſh linen manufacture has declined on account of the cheapneſs of Iriſh labour. But the contrary is well known to be the fact. Granting them their own premiſes, their concluſions do not follow. But from the evidence of Mr. Brook and Mr. Wilſon, two Iriſhmen, one of whom carried on a conſiderable manufacture in the county of Kildare, the other at Belfaſt, it appeared that the prices were higher in Ireland than in England. Mr. Wilſon declared that he could buy at Mancheſter for 16d. per yard, with a drawback of 1d. which left 15d. Engliſh money, what he could not make under

der 18½d. What in Mancheſter was wove for 3d. he paid 4¼d. per yard. He mounted their looms, furniſhed them with reeds, headles, and every utenſil of that kind; which he ſaid was not done in England. And he ſtated that there was a very conſiderable importation from England into Belfaſt, of cotton goods. Mr. Clark and Mr. Stead, Engliſhmen, who were employed in the ſame line in this country, give the ſame teſtimony. Mr. Clark emphatically ſays, we never will be able to work as cheap as the Engliſh, we certainly ſhall not for a ſeries of years.* That weaving and ſpinning is 1s. per piece cheaper in England than in Ireland. Mr. Haughton proved the wages of the ſilk weavers the ſame, except that the one was Iriſh and the other Engliſh money. Mark Aſh and John Boulger, journeymen ſilk weavers, an Engliſhman and an Iriſhman, declared the wages the ſame, and that they could live cheaper in England than Ireland. In the former they could expend their little money to the beſt advantage. In Ireland if they purchaſed a ſmall quantity of proviſions, they were obliged to buy an inferior kind.

I have ſhewn that the propoſitions of 1785 would not have opened to us the Engliſh market. If they would not, neither will the preſent ſixth propoſition. Mr. Walker, of Mancheſter, was aſked by the Lords,† "Whether he would prefer "being excluded from the Iriſh market, or wiſh

* See the examinations of the manufacturers before the Lords and Commons of England in 1785.

† Evidence before the Lords p. 199.

" to meet the Iriſh in the Britiſh market. He " anſwers, if I was under the neceſſity of chooſing, " I ſhould prefer being excluded from the Iriſh " market; becauſe when the Iriſh are capable of " entering into a competition in the Britiſh market, " they will certainly ſupply their own." The anſwer is well worth the conſideration of every Iriſhman. Do we ſupply our own, at this moment? How then can we ſupply the Britiſh?

They ſuppoſed labour cheaper and taxes lower in Ireland. But it is now ſhewn that manufacturing labour is dearer in Ireland. And it was the opinion of *a man of no mean talents* and accurate information, that our taxes were greater in proportion to our ability than thoſe of England. He wrote in 1779. Has Engliſh taxation encreaſed ſince that period? Iriſh has been augmented. Our exertions during the preſent war have been equal to the full extent of our capacity. Granting them their aſſumptions, their reaſoning was inconcluſive. The truth is, they had neither facts nor argument. Their ignorant* clamour contributed to thoſe alterations

* Commercial Reſtraints of Ireland, p. 115. well known to have been written by the late Iriſh Secretary of Sate. The fears of Mr. Wedgewood were truly ridiculous. A pottery had been ſet up in Ireland and failed, notwithſtanding it had received the greateſt encouragement by premiums. He ſuppoſed that the propoſitions would make the Iriſh ſet up potteries immediately to ſupply the Britiſh market, though they had been unable to work for their own. He talked a vaſt deal at large, but when aſked the queſtion, whether he would rather meet the Iriſh in the Britiſh

ations which cauſed in Ireland the final abandonment of a meaſure equally deſtructive to our liberty and commerce. They now ſeem convinced of their errors and are anxious to recover by an Union what they loſt by their folly.*

The concerns of Ireland would then be managed by an aſſembly over which Ireland could have no controul. And whoſe commercial deliberations would be ſwayed by Britiſh monopoly. If the ſixth propoſition would really effect what it profeſſes, which I have ſhewn it will not; the opening the Britiſh market to all the manufactures of Ireland, I cannot perceive the advantage. England poſſeſſes every manufacture common to both countries, the linen excepted, in the greateſt perfection. In every other branch ſhe is as much ſuperior to us as we are to her in that. Does ſhe eſteem it a favour that we admit Engliſh linens duty free, as ſhe does Iriſh? And think we grant her an ineſtimable benefit in opening the Iriſh market, when ſhe cannot ſupply her domeſtic conſumption. The inventive genius of her people has nearly for a century rendered the moſt unexampled taxation impotent to repreſs national improvement. Whether the period faſt approaches when the ingenuity

Britiſh market, or be excluded from the Iriſh: he anſwered, I do not ſee how either is likely to take place; which evidently ſhewed he had no apprehenſion of the Iriſh. The queſtion was repeated: he anſwered, he would rather meet the Iriſh in the Britiſh market than be ſhut out of the Iriſh.

* See Mr. Peele's ſpeech in the Britiſh Parliament as reported in the public papers. He was one of the manufacturers who gave evidence in 1785.

of

of man ſhall no longer enable labourious induſtry to contend with improvident expenditure, I cannot determine. But this I am ſure, to conſider England a certain market for Iriſh manufacture is the groſſeſt folly. That country at preſent poſſeſſes a conſiderable manufacture of low-priced and coarſe linens. In time ſhe will improve. I can look forward to a period, not perhaps during the preſent generation, when ſhe will be nearly adequate to her home ſupply. No compact binding England never to impoſe duties on the admiſſion of our linens could make permanent our preſent advantage in the Engliſh market. It could not ſtop the progreſs of Engliſh improvement, which nothing can prevent, except the expulſion of the linen manufacture from Britain. I have proved that in the preſent ſtate of her own manufacture, to impoſe duties on our linen, is not her intereſt. To execute the threat, would be injurious; to perform the promiſe, impoſſible.* Let the Iriſh cultivate the home market for her manufactures, which is the moſt valuable. On a moderate calculation it is ſuperior to the foreign by 61 to 1. This was the opinion of ſome of the beſt informed men on trade in the reign of Queen Anne, and the late writers on political economy, calculate its ſuperiority at a much larger proportion. America muſt be the

* I mean morally impoſſible. If we were to make the demand, England would not imitate the barbarous policy of Spain in the expulſion of the Moors, or revive againſt her linen manufacture the abſurd injuſtice which ſhe exerciſed on our woollen in 1698.

moſt

moſt certain and permanent market for redundant productions. From a number of phyſical cauſes, a long ſeries of years muſt roll away before ſhe becomes a manufacturing country ſufficient for domeſtic ſupply. Our trade with her is rapidly encreaſing, and is highly beneficial, whether eſtimated by the numerical balance or the articles in which it conſiſts. Commercial advantages cannot be the price of the Union. We have nothing to aſk. England has nothing to grant.

The ſettlement of 1782, had been conſidered final as to Conſtitution,* until Mr. Pitt propoſed the Union in the Britiſh Parliament. He aſſerted the contrary. I might leave him to the contradiction which he experienced from General Fitzpatrick. I ſhall however refer to the report of the Lords of the Committee of Council.† They quote the two reſolutions of the Engliſh Parliament, of the 17th of May, 1782, "Reſolved, That an act made in the reign of his "late Majeſty King George 1ſt, entitled, an act "for the better ſecuring the dependency of Ireland on the crown of Great Britain, ought to be "repealed." They then immediately came to the following reſolution. "Reſolved, that it is indiſpenſable to the intereſts and happineſs of both "kingdoms, that the connection between both

* The act of renunciation, the reſtoration of the appellant juriſdiction, and the annual mutiny bill, flowed almoſt as neceſſary conſequences from the repeal of the 6th of Geo. I.

† Page 69.

"kingdoms,

"kingdoms ſhould be eſtabliſhed by mutual con-
"ſent upon a ſolid and permanent baſis." The Committee think it probable that Ireland would not after her conſtitution was put on its preſent footing, be contented with the old ſyſtem of commerce between the countries.* And they cite the reſolutions of the 17th of May, 1782, in corroboration of their opinion. The ſuppoſition that the Engliſh Parliament, at the moment of acknowledging the independence of Ireland, were contemplating its future deſtruction, or that the Iriſh Legiſlature, when infuſing the life-blood of liberty into their conſtitution, were looking forward to its eternal death; is an abſurdity to which it is melancholy to ſee ſplendid talents reduced. It has been aſſerted in the Britiſh Senate that all our advantages, particularly thoſe of 1782, have

* In 1793 we acquired the fair conſtruction of the navigation act. If Ireland wants any other thing, it is protecting duties. Theſe ſhe can only obtain from her own Parliament, who, though they refuſed them on woollens, gave them in ſome degree on refined ſugar, beer, wine, and printed callicoes. Part of the duty on refined ſugar, has been repealed. Engliſh callicoe has ſtill a preference in the Iriſh market. The ſixth propoſition I have ſhewn deprives Ireland for ever of protecting duties, while it grants them to England. If to obtain an Union, protecting duties were conceded, they would inevitably be repealed by the United Legiſlature. For part of this note ſee Rep. of the Lord's Committee of Council p. 69. N. B. The fair conſtruction of the navigation act, with reſpect to Weſt Indian produce was enjoyed by the American ſtates till their ſeparation. See the Rep. of Engliſh Commiſſioners of Cuſtoms, p. 7, in 1785.

been

been favours not rights derived from the Engliſh Parliament as not required by the Iriſh Legiſlature. In anſwer to the firſt part of the aſſertion, I ſhall give the opinion of Lord Sheffield, who cannot be ſuſpected of partiality to this country. "Ireland, (ſays "he) received as a right, every advantage which ſhe "lately acquired, except a participation of the mo-"nopoly of the Weſt India conſumption of Britiſh "product and manufactures, for that ſhe was thank-"ful; and in return paſſed the act which encreaſed "the duties on ſugars, and engages to encreaſe them "in proportion to their future augmentation by Great "Britain, and lays prohibitory duties on the impor-"tation from foreign iſlands, by this bill (which was "to permit to independent America, the trade of the "Britiſh Weſt Indies) that monopoly would ceaſe. "Ireland will think Britain has done away the con-"ſideration that induced her to ſhut her ports againſt "foreign ſugars. Her redreſs might be to take "foreign Weſt India goods." His Lordſhip conſidered the free foreign trade our right, and the participation of the colony trade a fair purchaſe.*

I ſhall next conſider the remainder of the poſition. At the commencement of the reign of Charles 2d. an Engliſh Parliament voted the importation of Iriſh cattle into England a nuiſance, and deprived us of the fair conſtruction of the Navigation Act. In the reign of William, were paſſed four Engliſh acts of Parliament binding this country. Molyneux's caſe

* Lord Sheffield's Obſervations on the Commerce of the American States. p. 142, 145.

of Ireland had then been juſt publiſhed. The Iriſh Parliament recognized its principle, and tranſmitted to England heads of a bill re-enacting the Engliſh ſtatutes; intending to prevent the eſtabliſhment of a dangerous precedent.* What followed? The Engliſh Parliament addreſſed the King, condemning the publication, and the Iriſh bill; and then ordered the book to be burned by the common hangman. A few years after, they attacked the woollen manufacture, and totally prohibited its exportation from Ireland. In 1719, the Iriſh Lords aſſerted their appellant juriſdiction, which produced the Engliſh act of the 6th of Geo. 1ſt. In 1729 the Iriſh Parliament refuſed the ſupplies for 21 years. In 1753 they aſſerted their controul over the ſupplies of the hereditary revenue. In 1768 they paſſed the octennial bill. In 1779 the Iriſh Parliament addreſſed the Throne for a free trade. The Engliſh permited us to plant tobacco, and cultivate hemp. Commerce and Conſtitution was acquired in 1782. In 1785 the Engliſh Parliament paſſed the famous Propoſitions. The Iriſh, rejected them. In 1799 the Engliſh propoſe an incorporate Union, alike ſubverſive of our commerce and liberty. Our Parliament refuſed to conſider the debaſing propoſal. To which of theſe two aſſemblies has Ireland been moſt indebted? Whether the Iriſh acquiſitions of 1782, are to be

* It muſt be admitted that theſe ſtatutes were wiſe laws. The Iriſh Parliament were certainly of that opinion, as they wiſhed to give them a conſtitutional operation in this country.

aſcribed

aſcribed to the bold patriotiſm of the Iriſh people, and the Iriſh Parliament, or to the voluntary grant of Engliſh generoſity, is at the preſent day a moſt unimportant enquiry.

The ſettlement of that period, Mr. Pitt, if he is conſiſtent, muſt acknowledge is in the ſpirit of the ſoundeſt policy. He has more than once declared the injuſtice and folly of the antecedent ſyſtem.* Among other advantages of the Union exhibited by the Miniſter, we are to be made part of the ſame community, and to ſhare in the accumulated bleſſings which are diffuſed throughout Great Britain. The Iriſh and Britiſh Conſtitutions are in theory the ſame, and I would not at this moment exchange the Iriſh for the Britiſh Parliament.† I perceive unbounded confidence given to Miniſters in both countries, and

* Is the man under an obligation to another, who after having firſt enſlaved him reſtores him to freedom? To have introduced this topic was ſilly in the extreme. Reſentment muſt have had a momentary triumph over wiſdom.

† If the ſtate of the country requires Military Government for a time, I would rather ſubmit to it under the authority of an Iriſh than an Engliſh Parliament. Had the Union paſſed, it would ſtill have been the ſame, unleſs the meaſure would operate like enchantment, and change exiſting circumſtances in a moment. Nay, in all probability the preſervation of the Union would have been urged as a reaſon for entruſting Government with diſcretionary powers. See the anecdote related in the excellent work of Mr. Goold. I really believe (though ſome people may think I have great faith) that exactly the ſame number of cattle would have been houghed, and the ſame number of people robbed, the ſame depredations committed, even if our Parliament had voted an Union, and not madly rejected *the ſalvation of the country.*

I muſt ſay more in England than in Ireland.* Had the preſent war ended in 1796, the added capital to the debt, ſince its commencement, including the Emperor's loan, and intereſt, would then have been upwards of 170 millions, and the additional taxes to diſcharge the intereſt, 8 millions and ½. In 1791, when the arrears of the American war were funded, and diſcharged, the intereſt amounted to 9,289,120l. If to all this is added the expence of the two laſt years, can any man aſſert, the reſources of England are not ſeverely affected? And the Miniſter gravely declares that the meaſure of Union "originates in no "pecuniary ſource, nor with any view of conſidering "Ireland as a ſubject of taxation." The accumulated bleſſing of millions upon millions of debt which the Miniſter is diffuſing through Britain with a multiplying bounty, that would ſurpaſs the conception of a living Walpole, I have no ambition to ſhare. I admit the principle of contributing to the common defence of the empire, but it ſhould be at the diſcretion of a reſident Legiſlature, which from an accurate local knowledge, muſt be beſt acquainted with our reſources, and would apportion our burthens according to our ability. Should a rate of taxation be fixed, where is the ſecurity that it will be obſerved? To relieve our fears, Scotland is introduced. The extenſion of the malt tax into Scotland in 1713, was certainly a breach of the treaty of Union. It was

* I mean in the expenditure of public money; the ſums expended without being previouſly appropriated by Parliament, have rapidly encreaſed—And in 1796, for the firſt time, the unappropriated ſum was greater than the appropriated. See Morgan on Finance, p. 8, 37, 1797.

ſtipulated

ſtipulated that no duty was to be laid on malt in Scotland during the war. What was the true meaning of this article? That the malt of Scotland was not to be taxed for the ſupport of the war. At this time peace had not been even ſigned with Spain. This duty by the very words of the act was to be applied to the deficiencies during the war. The extenſion of the tax to Scotland violated not only the letter but the ſpirit of the article. The Scotch members in both houſes voted againſt it. And the injuſtice was ſo glaring, that in the Lords, the bill paſſed by a majority of eight.*

The preſent tax upon income, wherever it ariſes from land, unleſs there is an exception in favor of Scotland, will violate another article of the treaty. I ſee nothing in the ſtate of Scotland to induce me to wiſh for an Union. Anderſon, who publiſhed in 1786, declares there are nine counties in that country where, in the courſe of 10 years, from 1775 to 1784 incluſive, the expences of collecting the revenue exceeded the ſum collected by 531*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.* A ſyſtem of taxation, vexatious to the individual, not enriching the treaſury, impoveriſhing the ſtate, profitable only to collectors and exciſemen. He ſhews that the Engliſh ſyſtem of bonds and cockets, taxes the little trade of part of the Weſt coaſt, and the tolls at 500l.

* Burnet 12mo. ed. London p. 1230. I have been rather minute on this point, becauſe ſome of the pamphleteers in favour of an Union have affected to call the argument ſophiſtry. The refutation of it was rather expenſive to Scotland. And it is a compleat proof of the competency of Scotch repreſentation in a Britiſh Parliament.

per

per cent. more than that of Briſtol and Liverpool. And that the very ſalt laws paſſed, and the management of their fiſheries muſt eternally repreſs their improvement.* Here is demonſtration that the prudent commercial regulations of a flouriſhing nation, are totally inapplicable to a poor country, and that the ignorant kindneſs of a diſtant Legiſlature, may be full as pernicious as intentional injury. I have heard of large annual grants ſince the year 1770, for building bridges, and making highways. Yet Anderſon, 14 years after, adviſes the formation of a horſe road, to promote communication along the Weſtern coaſt.

If theſe evils have been ſince remedied, and I do not know that they have been, I rejoice.† The Scotch Union was made in 1706, and theſe evils exiſted in 1784. Admitting that Scotland has improved ſince the Union, if any thing can be drawn from ſuch inconcluſive reaſoning; Ireland has improved more. If her population has increaſed 6 or 800,000, that of Ireland has more than doubled. At that period our population did not exceed 2,000,000. It is now 4,381,000‡.

* See Anderſon's Account of the Weſt of Scotland and the Hebrides. Introduction p. 10, 28, 44, 45, 62. 1 Report, p. 40. 1 App. 328.

† Perhaps the letter written from Edinburgh, may give us ſome information. At another time I ſhall take more notice of this *candid lover* of TRUTH.

‡ I give this fact on the authority of the preſent Iriſh Chancellor of the Exchequer, who ſtated it in the Committee of Ways and Means this year.

I ſhall

I ſhall now give the exports and imports between Ireland and Great Britain, and alſo between Ireland and all parts of the world, at the time of the Scotch Union, and with the ſame countries at the preſent day.

Exports and imports between Ireland and Great Britain.

	Exports.	Imports.	Export. Exceſs.	Import. Exceſs.
1707,	343,329	337,783	5546	——
1708,	83,493	91,728	——	8235
1796,	3,883,911	3,484,608	399,303	——
1797,	3,819,075	3,398,727	420,348	——

Exports and imports between Ireland and all parts of the world, including thoſe between Ireland and Great Britain.

	Exports.	Imports.	Export. Exceſs.	Import. Exceſs.
1707,	614,304	552,207	62,597	——
1708,	152,542	147,749	4,793	——
1796,	5,064,834	4,882,397	182,437	——
1797,	4,535,616	4,338,123	197,493	——

Our exports of linen to England, have nearly doubled in the laſt 20 years, and to foreign parts, have encreaſed in a ratio greater than that of 21 to 1.

For the firſt three years after our free trade, our average annual export of old drapery to foreign parts was 854 yards. For three years, from 1794 to

to 1796 inclusive, it was 57,800 yards.* If the improvement of Scotland is attributed to the Union, the improvement of Ireland may as fairly be ascribed to her not having an Union. To determine either way, is to conclude without premises, as we can never know what the present state of Scotland would have been without that measure, or the present state of Ireland, if at the time of the Scotch Union she had united with England. Mr. Pitt admits that the number of absentees would increase, but asserts that the sums drawn by them from the country, would be more than repaid by the removal of capital to Ireland. I have sufficiently proved that the sixth proposition would effectually prevent the emigration of the English manufacturer for the purpose of supplying the British market. And for foreign trade, his inducement is as powerful as it would be after an Union. Nay it should be now stronger as our advantages are less within the controul of the monopolizing spirit of the British trader.† The drain of absentees from this country, according to the best calculation, is above one million and a half. To estimate the whole amount after an Union, above two millions is not unreasonable. The average balance of trade in our favour with England, is between 4 and 500,000l. To compensate for the present

* Our exports in the cotton manufacture to foreign parts, have increased in a very large proportion, during the same period.

† Even Mr. Peele does not talk of removing, on the adoption of an Union.

absentee

abſentee remittances, it ſhould be above a million and a half. After the Union it ſhould riſe to two millions. Ten per cent. is eſteemed a good ſteady profit in trade. Will the Union encreaſe the trading capital of this country 20 millions?

I ſhall now examine the Miniſter's doctrine, on the competency of Parliament. To aſſert that Parliament cannot, in contradiction to the will of the people expreſsly declared, alter the Conſtitution, and transfer the Legiſlature, in his opinion nearly amounts to Jacobiniſm. If it is Jacobiniſm, it is the Jacobiniſm of the Britiſh Conſtitution. What is it, but to aſſert, that "Parliament are the repreſenta-"tives, not the maſters of the people—the truſtees, "not the owners of the eſtate." That "the Con-"ſtitution ſhould be to them what the law is to the "Judges."* It is the Jacobiniſm of the great Lord Chatham, who frequently repeated in the Britiſh Senate, "that when the people elect repreſentatives, "they never mean to convey a power of invading "their rights, or trampling on their liberties." It was the ſentiment of the greateſt men in this country in 1785.† It is the opinion of the moſt reſpectable characters of the preſent day. At both periods it was loudly heard in the Iriſh Parliament. What is it but the denial of an uncontrouled diſcretion. The negation to human inſtitution of what is not permit-

* Woodfall's debate on the propoſitions.

† See the reſolution of the freemen and freeholders of the city of Dublin.

ted to the Deity who in the exercise of infinite power, is limited by infinite goodness and justice.

The assertion of the unlimited power of Parliament, is rank Jacobinism. That the same doctrine should be found in the writings of Thos. Paine, and the speeches of Wm. Pitt,* is not surprising. Republicans and tories always coincide in opinion upon the British Constitution. Their ends are different. Their means are the same.

The fourth proposition, no doubt, improves the condition of the conscientious Irish dissenter, who, when the seat of the Legislature is transferred to Britain, will find the English test act an insurmountable barrier to the gratification of honourable ambition.† It will operate equally against the catholic, whose emancipation is deferred to an indefinite period. Is this "laying open to the talents of Ireland, every "thing which inspires a noble and generous emula- "tion—every participation of high and honourable

* That part of the Minister's speech, which says that a denial of the competency of Parliament would invalidate the Scotch Union, is only an argument *ab inconvenienti*, and surrenders the principle. In our law 60 years possession makes that title good which was originally defective. The Scotch Union is upwards of 80 years old. He shews it might be inexpedient to apply the principle to the Scotch Union, but he by no means proves the competency of the Irish Parliament to vote an incorporate Union, contrary to the will of the people.

† It is almost unnecessary to observe, there is no test act against protestant dissenters in Ireland. The bill which annually passes the British Parliament for allowing the members time to qualify, operates only in favour of protestant dissenters, and does not extend to any of the offices of the state.

"offices."

" offices?" If a ſingle catholic ever thought of purchaſing equal privilege, at the expence of Iriſh independence, he muſt now be convinced of the folly of his expectation. The Miniſter's chief hope of accompliſhing the Union, aroſe from our diviſions. The country was therefore to remain in the ſame ſtate, for the careful preſervation of thoſe animoſities, which would then be abſolutely neceſſary to ſecure the continuation of a ſyſtem, which nothing but their exiſtence could ever have effected: ſilly ſpeeches are repreſented to have been made in the Britiſh Parliament. They betray more paſſion than principle—more prejudice than reaſon; but they are perfectly harmleſs. England and Ireland underſtand too well their real intereſt, to permit the angry ebullitions of baffled cunning, or humbled arrogance, to diſturb an intercourſe which has produced great, and may be productive of the higheſt poſſible advantage. We want no treaty with Britain.† The crowns are inſeparably connected. We have the ſame conſtitution, laws, manners, and cuſtoms, and we have, to

† In 1785 the then Attorney General ſaid, " as to the liber-
" ty of ſending our manufactures to the Britiſh market, I
" freely own I have not very ſanguine expectations from it.
" But I prize the advantage of the relaxation of the navigation
" laws highly."—Woodfall's debates, page 62. We obtained this relaxation in 1793. I have been informed, it was underſtood that it was granted as compenſation for our ſurrender of the trade to China. Will the Union reſtore that liberty? If not, our commercial advantages are now greater than they were before Orde's bill. A man might, with the greateſt conſiſtency on the ground of commerce, have voted for the bill, and now vote againſt the Union.

uſe the words of the Miniſter, "an identity of inte-"reſt, a ſecurity worth a thouſand compacts." By our remittances to abſentees, we pay annually to England upwards of one million and a half. There are, on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment above 140,000 men.* We give her our proviſions, our ſoldiers and ſeamen. And pay her for the protection of our trade, nearly two-thirds of the hereditary revenue having been originally granted for that purpoſe. And in proportion to our ability, we have always directly contributed to the defence of the empire. She may ranſack Germany for ſuch an ally. The wealth of India could not purchaſe her ſuch a friend. Let no man then aſſert that England is more independent of Ireland, than Ireland is of England. The ſeparation of the countries would be the ruin of the empire.†

We have been inſtructed in the ſchool of adverſity. We ſhall be made wiſe by dear-bought experience. A little time, and all invidious diſtinctions ſhall be aboliſhed. What is wrong, ſhall be made right. But in an Union, which deteriorates the condition of the Proteſtant, without improving that of the Catholic diſſenter; which augments the number of abſentees, and effectually prevents the introduction of capital; which neither encreaſes wealth, nor calms

* An account of 666,cool. was preſented to the Iriſh Parliament, at the beginning of the ſeſſion, the expences of the Engliſh militia for the time they have been in this country.

† I have been well informed, that the tonnage of the Iriſh trade, is equal to one-third of the commerce of England.

diſcontent;

diſcontent; I cannot perceive Iriſh happineſs, nor Imperial ſtrength. Every honeſt man ſhould endeavour to conciliate, rather than to inflame. Yet we have been told conciliation is deſtruction.* Merciful God! to conciliate is then to deſtroy. Happy am I, that experience amply refutes the wild aſſertion. Look back twenty years! What did conciliation produce? The ſentiment of ſtanding and falling with Britain, warming every heart, repeated by every tongue, was echoed in all the corners of the land. No internal tumults deſtroyed domeſtic comfort. No preparation of foreign armaments excited the fears of invaſion. The hoſtile fleets hovered on our ſhores; they dared not attempt to land. The enemy well knew that an armed United People were invincible. MAY NO INCORPORATE UNION EVER BE EFFECTED. MAY AN EQUAL HONOURABLE CONNECTION ALWAYS SUBSIST BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES. MAY THE EMPIRE FLOURISH. MAY IRELAND BE FREE.

* See a pamphlet entitled Verbum Sapienti, generally attributed to the author of Arguments for and againſt an Union. p, 13.

[*The aſſertion that England, in conſequence of an Union, could afford us more effectual aſſiſtance in caſe of invaſion, is admirably well expoſed in the witty and wiſe pamphlet, Ceaſe your Funning.*]

FINIS.